

EXHIBIT 2 B0H
DATE 2-4-09
HB 284

Feb. 3, 2009

RE: House Bill 284

Dear Committee Members,

I am a consumer writing in support of House Bill 284.

I am a 51-year-old mother of two children. For a number of years my physician has prescribed birth control pills for me. These are NOT for use as a contraceptive (in fact, I was unable to bear children and both mine are adopted), but for an unrelated therapeutic treatment.

I was shocked in the spring of 2007 when the new owners of my neighborhood drug store informed me that they would no longer fill my prescriptions because birth control pills essentially cause early abortions, thereby making them "immoral." Two of the pharmacists working there at the time privately told me they wanted to fill the prescriptions but were ordered not to. The fact that like many, many women, I was using the pills for a condition not related to birth control – though certainly none of their business, in my view – meant nothing to them.

It's very scary to think of all the ways such thinking can be applied in pharmacies. Some see evil in fertility drugs; others in anti-depressants. Can a pharmacist who believes that sex is only meant for procreation check with men before prescribing Viagra to make sure they are married and wanting children? Sounds ludicrous, but then, so does my personal example.

HB 284 won't end freedom of choice for those pharmacists who have strong feelings about certain drugs. But it will give consumers some confidence that pharmacists will act ethically and that one who is willing to fill their prescription may do so.

I urge you to pass this measure for medical consumers in Montana.

Sincerely,
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